

REMARKS

The Office Action notes that claims 3-5 are pending in the application. Of these, claim 3 was subject to an earlier restriction or election requirement.

Therefore, claims 4-5 are currently under consideration. By this response, claim 4 has been amended. Support for the amendment can be found throughout the originally filed specification, drawings and claims. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Claims 4 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Benson et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,696,627; "Benson") in view of Sasaki (U.S. Pat. No. 4,786,537).

The Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are allowable over the cited combination because even if Benson were combined with Sasaki, which the Applicant does not concede is possible, the combination would not define all of the features of the claimed invention. Specifically, claim 4 recites: "A shaped sheet for forming a resin coating having a convex-concave pattern, the shaped sheet comprising a substrate sheet and a releasable resin layer formed on one side of the substrate sheet . . ." The releasable resin layer has a convex-concave transfer pattern, having a top portion and a bottom portion that "are flat in a cross sectional shape thereof with a fine irregular surface . . ."

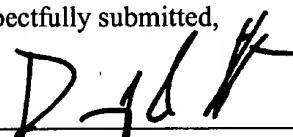
Page 2 of the Office Action cites Figure 18 of Benson as disclosing "a convex-concave pattern, where the top and bottom portions have flat cross-sectional shapes with irregular surfaces." The Applicant respectfully disagrees. Figure 18 of Benson depicts an optical retroreflective article having prismatic retroreflective

elements. (Column 1, lines 15-16). To have retroreflective properties, the surface shown in Figure 18 and the intersecting grooves have a regular shape and configuration. The configuration is formed by a regular arrangement of cube corner elements designed to impart optical retroreflective properties to the sheet. In contrast, the claims of the present application recite that the top portion and the bottom portion of the convex-concave pattern have a fine irregular surface. Therefore, even if Benson were combined with Sasaki, all the elements of the claims would not be disclosed. Independent claim 4, consequently, is allowable over the cited combination.

The Applicant respectfully submits that claim 5 is allowable for the same reasons as given with respect to claim 4.

In view of the aforesaid, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims pending in the application are in the condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: 8/28, 2003
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